

## **IN THE DRAWINGS**

Please replace the drawing sheet including Figs. 3 & 4 with the attached replacement sheet.

## REMARKS

Claims 1-33 are pending in the instant application. Claims 4, 16-24 and 28 are withdrawn from consideration pursuant to the Restriction Requirement made final in the most recent Office Action. Claims 25-27 and 30 are rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph as allegedly indefinite. Claims 1-3, 5-12 and 14-15 are rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,492,287 to Hogan (hereinafter, "Hogan"). Claims 25 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,556,158 to Blanchard, et al. (hereinafter, "Blanchard"). Claims 29-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by U.K. Patent Application GB 2 273 867 A by Hawkins, et al. (hereinafter, "Hawkins"). Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly obvious over Hogan in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,978,043 to Uke. Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly obvious over Blanchard in view of U.S. Patent No. 617,130 to Skinner. The drawings and specification are objected to for noted minor informalities.

As amended above, drawing sheet 5 of 10 comprising Figs. 3 and 4 is amended to include reference numeral 52 indicating a lower flange, and to include a leader line between reference numeral 50 and the upper flange. This amendment is fully supported by the original specification at, among other places, paragraph [0031]. Moreover, in the specification paragraph nos. [0036], [0062], [0063], [0066] and [0067] have been amended as indicated in the Office Action to correct minor editorial oversights. These amendments are fully supported by the original disclosure at least in the respective drawings. No new matter has been added. Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the drawing and specification objections is kindly requested.

Turning to the rejection of the claims as indefinite, claims 25-28 are cancelled without disclaimer or prejudice to their subsequent reintroduction in this or a continuing or divisional application. With regard to dependent claim 30, underlying independent claim 29 has been amended to recite a support bar, as opposed to a mere support, while claim 30 is amended to recite a support structure, to distinguish the support of claims 30 from the support bar as recited in claim 29. These amendments are fully supported by the original disclosure, and are only tangential to the substantive scope of the claims. Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is kindly requested.

Turning to the application of the cited references, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections, for at least the following reasons. At the outset, claim 1 is amended to remove the feature of the second support bar, not necessary to the embodiment, which is recited instead in claim 2. Claims 4 and 9 are amended to reflect the amendment to claim 1, with subject matter previous recited in claims 4 and 9 now present in new claims 32 and 33. New claims 32 and 33 read on the elected species.

Independent claim 1 is further amended above to recite a hanger comprising, *inter alia*, a locking bar and a support bar, wherein the locking bar is dimensioned to deflect to interface the supporting bar under a predetermined minimum force. This amendment is supported in the original specification as filed, for example paragraph [0039]. No new matter has been added. This feature is not taught or suggested by Hogan.

Hogan discloses a garment hanger having under each arm (3, 4) a horizontal branch (11) above a webbed finger (15), or resilient finger (17). In all embodiments of Hogan, a finger presses upward on a garment to hold it against the horizontal branch (11). There is no teaching or suggestion in Hogan that the horizontal branch (11) is dimensioned to

deflect under a predetermined minimum force to engage the support bar. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is patentably distinguished over Hogan.

Each of claims 2-3, 5-12, 14-15 and 32-33 depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claim 1. These dependent claims are each separately patentable, but are offered as patentable for at least the same reasons as their underlying independent base claim. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of all claims over Hogan has been obviated, and kindly requests favorable reconsideration and withdrawal.

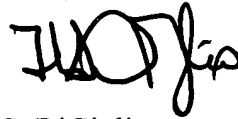
Turning to claim 16, this claim is also dependent from claim 1. The addition of Uke does not, nor is it alleged to, offer any teaching or suggestion to ameliorate the deficiencies of Hogan relative to the underlying independent claim. Therefore, even presuming the combination of Uke and Hogan is proper, all recited features of claim 1 are neither taught nor suggested by the references, taking singly or in combination. Therefore, applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claim 16 has been obviated, and should be withdrawn.

Turning now to claims 29-31, as amended above, these claims recited a method of hanging a flexible article, comprising, *inter alia*, providing a hanger having a flexible locking bar having a free end, and positioning one side of a folded article between the locking bar and the support bar, including deflecting the free end of the flexible locking bar out of the plane of the hanger to assist in the positioning. This amendment to the claim is fully supported by the original disclosure, for example, at para. [0031] and [0040], among other places. No new matter has been added. These features are neither taught nor suggested by Hawkins.

Hawkins discloses a garment hanger having a locking bar (8) and a broken support bar (6). The locking bar (8) is secured at both ends to the body of the hanger by resilient webs (10). There is no teaching or suggestion in Hawkins that the locking bar has any free end, nor that the free end is deflected out of the plane of the hanger to assist in the position of an article on the hanger. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 29 is patentably distinguished over Hawkins. Each of claims 30-31 depend from independent claim 29. These dependent claims are each separately patentable, but are offered as patentable for at least the same reasons as their underlying independent base claim. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of all claims over Hawkins has been obviated, and kindly requests favorable reconsideration and withdrawal.

In light of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that all claims recite patentable subject matter, and kindly solicits and early and favorable notice of allowability.

Respectfully Submitted,



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